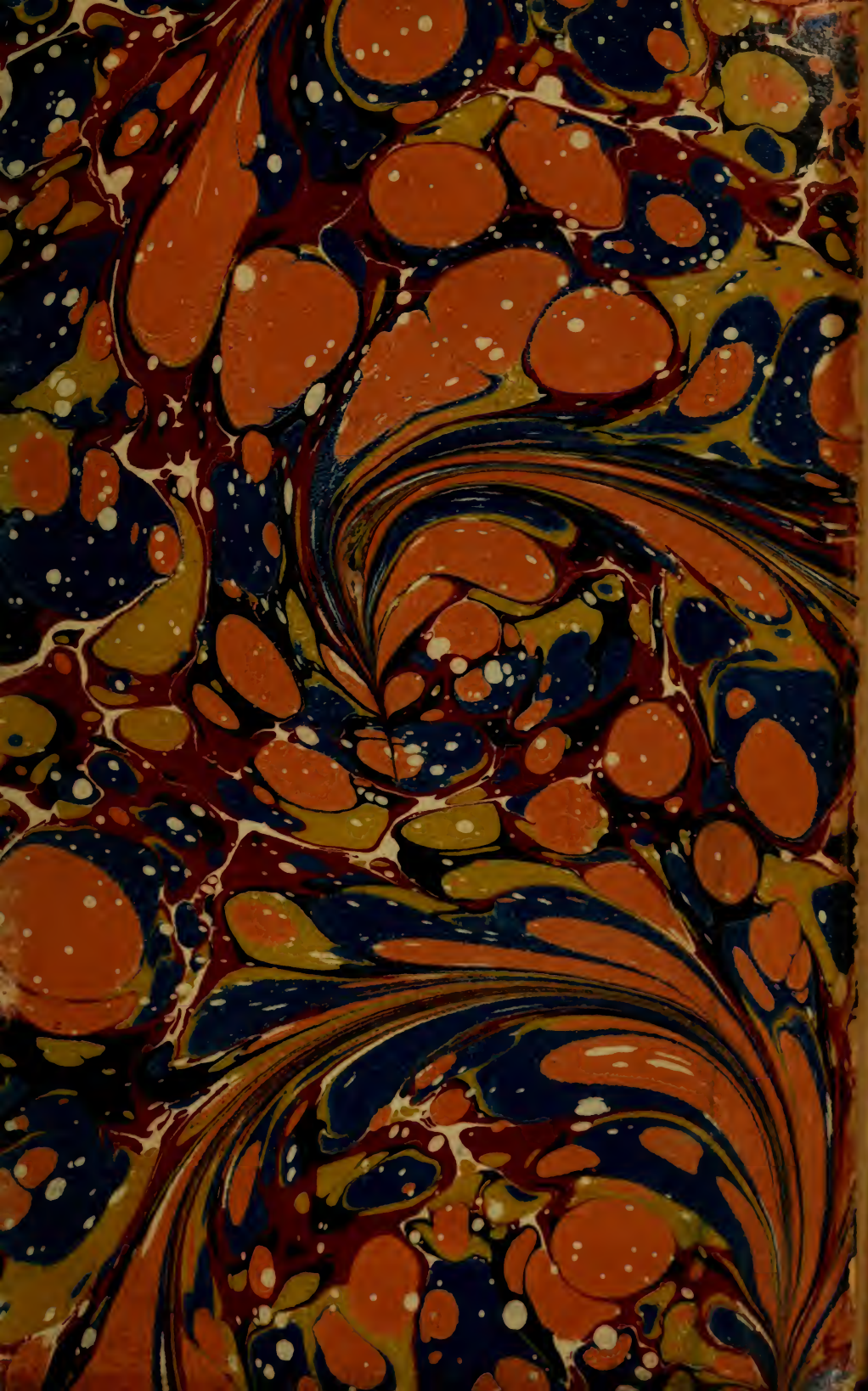



9258 COMPLAYNT of SCOTLAND, written in 1548, with a Dissertation
and Glossary, by J. Leyden, large Svo. *hf. morocco extra, top edge gilt,*
uncut, £5. *Edinburgh, 1801*

This political treatise on the relations between the "Three Estates" in Scotland
at the end of the first half of the 16th century, is attributed to three persons: Sir
D. Lyndsay, Sir Jas. Inglis, and Wedderburn.







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CRITIQUES

BY

MR DAVID HERD AND OTHERS,

UPON THE NEW EDITION OF

“THE COMPLAYNT OF SCOTLAND;”

WITH

OBSERVATIONS IN ANSWER;

BY THE EDITOR,

THE LATE DR. JOHN LEYDEN.

EDINBURGH:

M. DCCC. XXIX.

CRITIQUE

MR DAVID HERR AND OTHERS,

WITH THE HISTORY OF

THE COMPANYS OF SCOTLAND.

OBSERVATIONS BY A. H. H.

BY THE AUTHOR.

THE LATE DR JOHN HERR.

EDINBURGH.

1794.

I. A LETTER

FROM MR. DAVID HERD,

ON "THE COMPLAYNT OF SCOTLAND."*

SIR,

HAVING perused, with considerable attention, the new edition of that curious work, "The Complaynt of Scotland;" I beg leave to trouble you with some observations, which occurred to me at the moment.

The inductive evidence by which the Editor attempts to support his opinion, that this work was composed by Sir David Lindsay of the Mount, does not appear to me quite satisfactory. Perhaps I have received an original bias in favour of the first opinion, which attributes that work to Sir James Inglis; but that opinion seems to be encumbered with fewest difficulties. It is true, that Pinkerton, in his History of Scotland, has mentioned James Inglis, who was denominated Sir, from being a dignified priest, who was secretary to Queen Margaret, afterwards Abbot of Culross, and was murdered by the Baron of Tulliallan in 1531; but this does not prove decisively, that no other Sir James Inglis existed at that period.

The design and doctrine of the Complaynt of Scotland does not seem to be in favour of the Reformation, and an alteration of the national religion; but is rather written in support of the French interest in Scotland;—for rejecting the proposed alliance and marriage between Mary and Edward;—and maintaining the war with England.

Mackenzie, vol. iii. p. 40, says, that Sir James Inglis, "upon the death of James V. joined with the French faction, in opposition to the pretended marriage betwixt the Infant-Queen of Scotland, and the Prince of Wales:"—So that his religious sentiments were those of the author of the Complaynt.

Sir David Lindsay's writings were in favour of the Reformation, as appears from all his works. And Pinkerton asserts that he "was more the reformer of Scotland than John Knox; for he prepared the ground, and John only sowed the seed."

List of Poets, ap. Pinkerton's Maitland Poems.

After the publication of Sir David's various treatises, dedicated to the King, and others, how could he have called this *Tracteit* (the Complaynt) "the first laubirs of his pen;" and addressed it, as such, to the Queen-Regent, with whom he was not in favour?

In p. 131. of the *Preface to the Complaynt, the Elegy on the Piper of Kilbarchan* is ascribed to Hamilton; but in the statistical account of Kilbarchan, Vol. XV. p. 491, it is ascribed to Semple; as also in Crawford's History of Renfrewshire, published by William Semple in 1782. p. 162. If you think these observations of sufficient importance to insert them in your miscellany, they may be followed by others.

* From the Scots Magazine, for January 1802.

II. CRITIQUE ON

"THE COMPLAYNT OF SCOTLAND;"*

(*Attributed to JOHN PINKERTON, Esq.*)

WE are glad to see a republication of this curious and classical work in old Scottish prose. The editor is Mr Leyden, who has shown considerable talents in the execution ; and it is dedicated to Richard Heber, Esq. as being undertaken at his suggestion. It is printed in a neat and accurate manner ; though we should have wished for an ink of double the blackness ; and request that our printers would inspect the common works now published in France, which strangely contrast with what are called the monks and friars of our presses. The uniform full black colour imparted by the French presses is strikingly different from the pale meagreness of our common press-work. In the present production, the quarto, which should have been most carefully attended to, is rather inferior to the octavo.

The first idea of a republication of the *Complaynt of Scotland* was suggested by the editor of *Poems from the Maitland Manuscript* ; London, 1786, vol. ii. p. 542. The opinion of that editor, that the work was written by one Wedderburn, Mr Leyden attempts to controvert ; but certainly without success. Mr Herbert, who republished *Ame's Typography*, was a heavy plodding man, originally engaged in very different pursuits, and wholly destitute of common literary sagacity. Nor can we compliment Mr Leyden upon this occasion, whose reasoning seems to us rather grotesque. Any man of plain sense would conclude, from the double mention of this rare article in the *Harleian Catalogue* under the name of Wedderburn, amounting to proof positive, especially as the name is spelt with a V instead of a W—a singularity which prevails throughout the book—that the copy there mentioned had the title-page, which is wanting in all the others, and in which the name of the author appeared.† The difference of spelling in the two articles of that catalogue proceeds merely from greater care, as usual, being employed in the first entry. Mackenzie was not in the least conversant in the critical study of antiquities ; and Mr Leyden seems to forget that his *Lives of the Scottish Authors* abound with the grossest errors. The doubts concerning Sir James Inglis might have been done away by looking at Mr Pinkerton's *History of Scotland* ; and our editor has certainly, in this instance, acted like a mere antiquary, in throwing obscurity over a clear subject.

He proceeds (p. 17.) to offer his opinion that this singular production was written by Sir David Lindsay, because, forsooth, he wrote many poetical Complaints ; and both authors have thoughts in com-

* From the *Critical Review*, for May 1802.

† This was Ritson's opinion.—See his *Letters to Paton*, p. 16. and one of the very rare instances in which he agreed with Pinkerton.

mon ! The whole introduction is extremely tedious and prolix ; and the most patient antiquary will find considerable difficulty in the perusal. Mr Leyden has evidently read a great number of old books ; but the want of divisions and arrangement throughout two hundred and ninety-two deadly pages, presents a chaos without any bridge over it, and which we shall never again attempt to pervade. In the form of distinct notes, and reduced to half the length, this mass might have been rendered somewhat bearable ; but as long notes have justly become an object of ridicule, they now, it seems, begin to be amassed into long introductions, which can be of no possible service, as the various topics are utterly forgotten before we arrive at the text :

Dum vitant stulti vitia, in contraria currunt.*

The glossary is ample, and in some respects curious. In p. 347 of the second progress of sheets, the author expresses a strange opinion, that the fishermen on the east coast of Scotland, instead of retaining the rough old dialect of their fathers, are, forsooth, of Flemish and Danish origin !

With regard to the work itself—The Complaynt of Scotland, which here becomes almost an appendix to Mr Leyden's prolix, digressive, and retrogressive dissertation—it is printed not as a classic, but in *fac simile*, with all the confusion of the original edition. Upon this plan, we might print the Greek and Roman classics, not with the elegance and clearness of modern typography, but in the confused manner of the manuscripts ! We suspect that the editor of the Maitland Poems would have followed a different method ; but he is, we believe, sufficiently disgusted with the barren field of Scotch history and antiquities, in which the greatest labours have been repaid not only with ingratitude, but with calumny. ' It is an ancient saying, that neither the wealthy, nor the valiant, nor even the wise, can long flourish in Scotland ; for envy obtaineth the mastery over them all ;' says Sir David Dalrymple, in his Annals, vol. ii. p. 209, translating the words of old Fordun.

* The Reviewer then gives a very full extract from the Introduction, which it was judged inexpedient to reprint.

III. OBSERVATIONS

ON

“THE COMPLAYNT OF SCOTLAND,”

BY THE LATE DR. JOHN LEYDEN.*

SIR,

PERMIT me to thank your correspondent D. H. for his observations in your Magazine for last January, on the new edition of the Complaynt of Scotland, and to assure him, that the Editor will be highly gratified by the continuation of his strictures. When the Editor arranged the inductive arguments which induced him to conjecture, that the Complaynt was the composition of Sir David Lindsay of the Mount, he could scarcely flatter himself, that his proofs would make the same impression on the minds of his readers, as on his own. When a person engages in the comparative study of two authors, many minute circumstances occur to him, and have a silent and imperceptible influence on his own judgment, which he finds himself utterly incapable of stating to another, who does not subject himself to the same process of study. This was what I experienced in no common degree, in collecting my arguments concerning the author of the Complaynt; and, in attempting to state the principal grounds of my opinion, which were numerous and multifarious, I found it extremely difficult to avoid spreading them over much more paper than they at present occupy. Many observations were likewise hazarded, more from the desire of inviting liberal discussion, than from a conviction that they were in their own nature unanswerable. If such a discussion were to throw any additional light on so obscure a subject, though at the risk of overturning the hypothesis which I have endeavoured to support, I am convinced, that no person would feel more gratified than myself. The man who can sacrifice truth to vanity, deserves the severest mortification, that the contempt of literary men can inflict,—a mortification which envy seldom fails to make her votaries experience.

Your correspondent seems still to incline to the opinion of Mackenzie, that the Complaynt was composed by Sir James Inglis, and thinks, that this author might be a different person from the abbot of Culross, who was murdered in 1531 by the Baron of Tulliallan. Now, though it is possible some other person of this name might exist in the period between 1531 and 1549, yet his existence ought not to be presupposed, till it be demonstrated by some authentic documents. But the life of Sir James Inglis, given by Mackenzie, is confessedly

* From the Scots Magazine, for July 1802.

founded on no documents whatever that we are acquainted with, and therefore it is of no authority. Besides, though Mackenzie says, that Sir James Inglis, on the death of James V. joined the French faction, in opposition to that of the English, yet he seems to identify the abbot of Culross with his Sir James Inglis, whom he relates to have died at Culross. Now, as we have said, it can be proved that the abbot of Culross was murdered by the Baron of Tulliallan, 18 years before the publication of the Complaynt of Scotland.

But your correspondent farther objects, that the writings of Lindsay, contrary to the spirit of the Complaynt of Scotland, are in favour of the Reformation. Of the force of this objection I was aware, when I composed the Preliminary Dissertation of the Complaynt, and have accordingly stated, that at a period of such eminent danger as that which succeeded the battle of Pinky, it could not be the object of a patriot to irritate any class of men, but rather to conciliate and unite every class of men in the defence of their country. It still remains to be proved that Lindsay, though favourably disposed to a reformation, was not a patriot, or was engaged in the English interest. In his satire, he exhorts the Estates to provide for war in time of peace, and mentions "the awld ennemeis of England."

But it farther appears to me, that the part which Lindsay took in the Scottish Reformation, has been greatly misunderstood and misstated. The expressions, that "Lindsay was more the reformer of Scotland than John Knox," and that "he prepared the ground, and John only sowed the seed," are in the highest degree vague and unmeaning. It is very true, that Lindsay bitterly satirized the vices of the Scottish clergy, and the abuses of religion; but so did the author of the Complaynt of Scotland; so did the lay writers of that period; so did the ingenuous Dunbar; and so did the more learned ecclesiastics in almost every country in Europe, for many centuries before that period. All these assisted in preparing the ground, as Mr Pinkerton phrases it, accommodating themselves to the temper of the times, and to the manner of thinking among all virtuous and moderate men. The most virtuous and learned of the Catholic clergy ardently desired a reformation, both in general morals, and in ecclesiastical institutions, but they dreaded the effect of popular enthusiasm; and the tumultuous and riotous scenes which attended the Reformation evinced, that these fears were not groundless. The Scottish reformation did not start into existence, as a complete system of religious doctrines and institutions. It was modified by particular local and temporary circumstances, as well as by the state of the public mind. Many things were yielded to violence, and many were yielded to prejudice. But the particular ecclesiastical system which was finally adopted, did not assume a definite form, till years after the death of Lindsay.

Your correspondent D. H. likewise asserts, that had the Complaynt been the production of Lindsay, he could not have called it his first *Tracteit*, when he addressed it to the Queen Regent. Now, had I ever supposed, that the Complaynt was published with the name of Lindsay, this objection would have had some force; but, on the con-

trary, I have expressly assigned various reasons of political danger to account for its being originally published anonymously.

Though, from these reasons, I cannot admit the validity of your correspondent's objections to my hypothesis concerning the author of the Complaynt, I am inclined to pay more deference to his opinion, concerning the author of the elegy on the Piper of Kilbarchan. For though the authorities of the statistical account of Kilbarchan, and Semple's History of Renfrewshire, had not escaped my notice, yet I did not think them quite satisfactory at the time of publishing the Preliminary Dissertation. On farther examination of the subject, I am inclined to think my opinion rather premature; but I am still of opinion, that the subject requires and admits of illustration, and I should therefore be highly gratified by any of your literary correspondents who should bestow on it an accurate investigation.

The mention of the elegy on the Piper of Kilbarchan, suggests the propriety of observing, that in this elegy, two ancient Scottish tunes are mentioned, which are denominated

“ *Trixie, and the Maiden Trace.* ”

Trixie is most probably the original air of the satirical song

“ *Hay trix, trim go trix, under the grenwode trec.* ”

(ap. Dalryell's Scottish Poems, vol. ii. p. 191.)

“ *The Maiden Trace* ” may be referred to a still higher antiquity; for there can be little doubt that it is referred to in that ancient and curious poem “ *Cockelby's Son,* ” quoted in the preface to the Complaynt of Scotland, p. 281.

“ *Sum trottet Tras, and Trenass.* ”

After these observations on the remarks of your candid correspondent D. H. permit me to offer you some animadversions on the strictures of the Critical Reviewer for June, on the new edition of the Complaynt of Scotland. Instead of candidly appreciating the merits or demerits of the edition, my Reviewer sedulously states a comparison, not between the edition of the Maitland Poems, and the new edition of the Complaynt, but between my edition of the Complaynt, and the edition of that work which might have been given by the Editor of the Maitland Poems. It is evident, nobody could be so well qualified to state this implied comparison as the Editor of the Maitland Poems himself, and this Editor was Mr Pinkerton. The stile of this gentleman is admitted to possess a quality which is almost peculiar, and which accords extremely well with his manner of thinking; a manner, which is characterized more by energy than originality. The stile of my Reviewer too is a little peculiar in its structure; for there is an inveterate and indelible tinge of mannerism which adheres to the writings of some men; and this I doubt not, might excite suspicions in the mind of a person who had studied Mr Pinkerton's stile. However, though the Editor of the Complaynt may be at a loss for the name of the antiquarian and historical Reviewer in the Critical Re-

view, common fame is at none. But waving this, I cannot help declaring, that as a Tiro in Scottish antiquities, I feel highly flattered in being compared to such a literary veteran as Mr Pinkerton ; and after having thus made my acknowledgments, I shall proceed to offer a few animadversions on the strictures of the Reviewer.

The Critical Reviewer asserts, that the first idea of a republication of the Complaynt of Scotland was suggested by the Editor of Poems from the Maitland manuscript, London, 1786. The assertion could only be dictated by ignorance or vanity ; for Lord Hailes, the Editor of the Bannatyne Poems, had, in the year 1770, declared, that the person who should give a classical edition of Inglis's Complaynt, would perform an acceptable service to the public. The same spirit of appropriation is displayed in terming the assertion, that one Wedderburn was the author of the Complaynt, *the opinion of the Editor of the Maitland Poems*. No doubt, it is the opinion of that Editor ; but, so far from being exclusively his, it is only the second hand opinion of the compiler of the Harleian catalogue.

The Reviewer terms my reasoning concerning the author of the Complaynt rather *grotesque* ; I am obliged to him for using so gentle an epithet ; and he asserts, that I seem to forget that Mackenzie's Lives of the Scottish Authors abound with the grossest errors. This I certainly did not forget, nor can it be fairly inferred from any passage in the preliminary Dissertation ; but this is the general language used by the Reviewer, with regard to every person that differs from him in opinion. Mackenzie is not the least conversant in the critical study of antiquities, and Herbert is a heavy plodding man, wholly destitute of common literary sagacity. This is precisely the stile of the Editor of the Maitland Poems, concerning any author ancient or modern, who may happen to be adverse to any of his particular hypotheses, though that very author may suddenly recover his authority and credit in a wonderful manner, if it appear that he can be quoted in his own favour. Mackenzie and Herbert may both be dull plodding men, but surely neither genius nor ability is required to quote a title page correctly, when a person has the book lying before him ; and the question with respect to Mackenzie is precisely, whether he was capable of copying a title-page when he had the book lying before him : and this principle is equally applicable to the compiler of the Harleian catalogue. It is evident, that if the one could copy a title-page, so could the other, and their two authorities are therefore to be considered as equal and opposite, till a perfect copy of the Complaynt be discovered.

The Reviewer adds, that the doubts concerning Sir James Inglis might have been done away by looking at Mr Pinkerton's History of Scotland ; but what information could Mr Pinkerton's History have afforded, except the very passage of Leslie's History which I have quoted in the Preliminary Dissertation, p. 13 ; and as I have quoted this very passage, it is idle to suppose, that I could ever have imagined, that the same Sir James Inglis, who was murdered by the Baron of Tulliallan in 1531, could be the author of the Complaynt in 1548.

In discussing the claims of Wedderburn to be reckoned the author of the Complaynt, I have said, that the history of this personage was involved in great obscurity, and I am still of this opinion. Since the publication of my Dissertation, it has been in some degree illustrated; neither, however, by the Critical Reviewer, nor by the Editor of the Maitland Poems, if they be different persons, but by the indefatigable researches of J. Dalryell, Esq. Advocate, in the learned dissertations, prefixed to his *SCOTISH POEMS* of the sixteenth century, 1801. This ingenious Editor has shewn, that there were three brothers of the name of Wedderburn, all of whom were addicted to poetry. James the eldest, about the year 1540, composed plays in the Scottish language, satirizing the general corruptions of religion in a tragedy on the beheading of John the Baptist; and attacking the catholics in particular, in a comedy, the subject of which was the History of Dionysius the Tyrant, both of which were performed at Dundee. Calderwood adds, that "he counterfeited also the conjuring of a ghaist." The second brother being prosecuted as an heretic, retired to Germany, where he attended Luther and Melancthon. He wrote Scottish religious poems, and turned many obscene songs into hymns. After the death of James V. he returned to Scotland; but on account of heresy was again obliged to desert his country, and retired into England, where he is supposed to have died about 1556. The third brother, who surpassed both the other two in learning, was vicar of Dundee, and likewise changed many profane songs into hymns, which were called "The Psalms of Dundie." He is likewise said to have associated with the reformers, and to have been connected with them at Paris. *Cursory Remarks on "ane booke of godly songs."* p. 31—36. ap. *SCOTISH POEMS OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.* This account of the Wedderburns certainly renders it more probable, if the subject be abstractly considered, that the Complaynt of Scotland might be the production of one of the brothers; but we do not owe this information to the sagacity or the research of the Editor of the Maitland Poems. Besides, the objection that has been urged against Sir David Lindsay, that he was a favourer of the Scottish Reformation, applies with equal force against each of the brothers, till additional evidence be obtained. Nay, this objection applies even more forcibly to the Wedderburns than to Lindsay, for one of them was confessedly of the English faction, and died in exile in England.

My Reviewer terms the Preliminary Dissertation of the Complaynt tedious, prolix, digressive, retrogressive, a chaos without any bridge over it, and which he shall never again attempt to pervade. It is true, this threat is very alarming, and the gentleman is certainly the best judge of his own intentions: I can only therefore congratulate him on the number of blunders he has detected in one perusal. That it would be reckoned tedious by persons not conversant in those minute pieces of information which it was intended to convey, I was well aware. But I was likewise aware, that there are many minute enquiries connected with Scottish history, that many persons would be glad to see illustrated, though nobody thinks them of sufficient im-

portance to be the subject of a direct investigation. On this account, I have occasionally *digressed* into a collateral enquiry ; but in this method of discussion, there is undoubtedly nothing which can fairly be termed *retrogressive*.

But the Dissertation is likewise "a chaos without any bridge over it ;" and yet my Reviewer, like the Devil of Milton, has made his way through it with impunity. He objects to me the want of divisions and arrangement. I am ready to grant that my divisions might have been more numerous, and my arrangement more clearly stated ; but does he not reflect, that his favourite Greek and Roman classics always prefer a concealed arrangement to that open and numerical distribution of their materials, which palls curiosity, though it conduces to perspicuity. But the Preliminary Dissertation is not altogether defective in arrangement. Its two principal divisions relate, the first of them to the author of the Complaynt, and the second to the subject of that work. The Dissertation on the subject of the Complaynt, naturally divides itself into three sections, according to the obvious division of that work into three parts, which may be entitled, 1. The Complaynt of the author ; 2. His Monologue ; and 3. His Dream ; and to each of these parts, it forms a species of running commentary. The subdivision of topics under each of these heads, arises naturally from that part of the work which it is intended to illustrate. But my critic is content to allow, that in the form of distinct notes, and reduced to half the length, my illustrations might have been rendered "somewhat bearable." Now, if we merely consider the length, it is obvious, they would be rendered *just one half more bearable* ; it is quite a different question, whether they would have been rendered less tedious ; for my Reviewer must be conscious that it is possible to render a single volume more tedious than half-a-dozen.

I have stated, p. 288, that I preferred the continuous form of a dissertation to that of separate notes, as giving a more complete view of the subject, and affording an opportunity of exhibiting it in its different bearings, and relations to other subjects with which it may be connected. My Reviewer, on the contrary, declares, that long introductions can be of no possible service, as the various topics are utterly forgotten before arriving at the text ; and politely concludes with roundly calling me a fool in Latin, "*Dum vitant stulti vitia, in contraria currunt.*" I have seen a treatise of Charpentier's, in which that learned man asserts, that there is a certain coarseness of character, a want of delicacy, and an outrageousness of invective, inherent in the very structure of the Latin language, which inevitably infects those who cultivate it. Now, to read the strictures of some periodical critics, and even of some modern authors, what fine Latin scholars must not one imagine them to be. But literary questions are seldom decided at present by loudness of vociferation, or virulence of abuse.

In order, however, to perceive the superior advantage of our critic's system of notes, let us for a moment advert to his favourite edition of the Maitland Poems, to which he so frequently and so fondly refers. In consideration of the industry of the Editor, let us overlook

his inaccuracy of quotation, especially when he quotes the outside of a book instead of the inside, as when he mentions the romance of Sir Tristram by Seult Labonde de Cornoalle, p. 67. who, instead of being an author, was the mistress of the hero, and termed Iseult la Blonde ; in consideration of his learning, let us overlook his ignorance backed by pedantry, as in his strange explanations of common Scottish words from the Suio-Gothic, and Icelandic ; his searching Bleau's Atlas for the parish of Bowden, which may be found in any common Scottish almanac ; his mistaking the phrase *burd alane* for a proper name, and his total ignorance of the story of Hector of Harlaw, the agent in delivering up the Earl of Northumberland ; in consideration of his modesty, let us forget his shameless defence of obscenity, and for the sake of his candour, let us pass over his frequent bolstering of impertinence with scurrility. He found Scottish antiquities a neglected harvest field, and no doubt he reaped a plentiful harvest, though he scattered much grain at random, and left many corners of the field untouched by the sickle. But let us consider how he has performed the duty of an editor, before his work be exhibited as a perfect standard of its kind. He has published 364 pages of poetry, 143 pages of dissertation, with 19 of preface, 160 of notes, and 20 of glossary. His dissertations consist so completely of extraneous matter, that they might with equal propriety be prefixed to any book of the kind ; and in p. 390, he tells us, " I am glad now and then to relieve the reader and myself from the dryness of these explanatory notes." This dryness I believe, has never been doubted by any person who perused them ; and it was the perfect conviction of this radical and incurable evil which first induced me to think of throwing my observations into the form of a dissertation. In his dissertation on the origin of Scottish Poetry, there is scarcely a single remark which can be applied to illustrate the poems to which it forms an introduction, and as few as possible in his list of Scottish poets. The appendix contains many valuable observations, many which are extremely inaccurate, and many more that have no relation whatever to the proper object of the publication. Yet with all these defects, and a most insolent, intolerant, and pedantic style, who is there that would deny to Mr Pinkerton the praise of extensive information, of indefatigable research, of wide erudition, and acuteness of observation ? Let us grant all this to the Editor of the Maitland Poems, but let not his work be proposed as a perfect model of its kind, a degree of praise to which it is so little entitled. If the labours of Mr Pinkerton, in the field of Scottish history and antiquities, have not been repaid with gratitude, he ought to recollect, that, in literary controversy, the possession of the most ample qualities of the scholar will never atone for the dereliction of those of the gentleman. Arrogance and petulance, like virtue, are often their own reward. If he has been assailed by calumny, as my Reviewer likewise insinuates, he ought to consider whether this calumny has not been assiduously invited by the outrageous invective in which he has too frequently indulged.

But I am not yet done with my critic ; the Complaynt he asserts is

not printed as a classic, but in *fac simile* with all the confusion of the original edition; and, as if any doubt remained of his meaning, he adds, "upon this plan, we might print the Greek and Roman classics, not with the elegance and clearness of modern typography, but in the confused manner of the manuscripts." For this lumping observation, however, there is scarcely a shadow of truth. The Complaynt of Scotland is neither printed with the confusion, of the original edition nor in the confused manner of manuscripts. It is no farther a *fac simile* than as the pages of the new correspond to those of the original edition. The punctuation of the original edition is corrected, as likewise the marginal quotations of classical authors, which, in the original, were very erroneous. The orthography of the original, it is true, has been constantly preserved, but typographical blunders have been constantly corrected. I have not ventured to fix a standard of orthography, because I am certain, that at that period, there was none in either the Scottish or the English language. Had I acted otherwise, I should certainly have destroyed the value of the edition. Where then is the confusion of which my Reviewer speaks? If his words have any meaning, he has condemned me for having given *too correct* an edition of the Complaynt. Is not this the precise process which has been observed in all the valuable editions of the Greek and Roman classics? But it is improper to compare the Complaynt to those classics, which were composed when the orthography of their respective languages was fixed; it should only be compared to the Fragments of the twelve Tables, or to the *Fragmenta veterum Poetarum Latinorum*. What is it then, which my Reviewer blames? Surely he had forgotten, that at the very commencement of his strictures, he has declared, that the work is printed in a *neat and accurate manner*.

The Reviewer terms the opinion, that the fishermen on the east coast of Scotland, are chiefly of Flemish and Danish extraction, a strange one. I have no doubt it must appear so to those, who adopt the hypothesis of Mr Pinkerton. Strange as the opinion may be, there is no difficulty of establishing it, both by an appeal to historical documents, and by the traditions of the people. Among these fishermen, the Buchan dialect is spoken in the greatest perfection, and with as much propriety in Fife and Angus, as in Murray and Buchan. But this question is connected with the origination and distinctions of the different Scottish dialects; subjects which I intended to have discussed in an additional dissertation. An attentive examination of the subject for that purpose, convinced me, that there is no foundation whatever for supposing the Scottish language to be a dialect of the Icelandic or Scano-Gothic, but that on the contrary, whether we regard the derivation or the flexion of words, it is more closely allied to the Saxon as a mother-tongue, than is the English itself. That the English contains more Danish or Icelandic words than the Scottish, will appear from collating and comparing the words in a common dictionary under any letter of the alphabet. The Border and western dialects of the Scottish are almost purely Saxon in their peculiar vocables. The eastern dialect of the Scottish contains numerous Danish and Fle-

nish words, with a considerable mixture of Celto-Gaelic ; but of the ancient Pictish dialect, of which we have heard so much, the Scottish does not exhibit a single vestige. On the contrary, *Pennahel*, the only word known to be Pictish, is obviously of Celtic origin.

So far had I written before I recollected, that my critic has seriously charged the learned and accurate Professor Dugald Stewart, (vid. Review of Stewart's *Life of Robertson*, ap. *Critical Review* for July 1802) *with ignorance of literary history*. I am now convinced, I have lost my labour. We have all heard with a smile, of ridicule being the test of truth, but I suppose we must soon expect to hear effrontery proposed as its standard.

IV. CRITIQUE ON

"THE COMPLAINYNT OF SCOTLAND."*

It would ill become us, who consider ourselves as caterers for the public, to deny or undervalue the plenty which prevails in our literary market, or the excellence of the articles with which it is supplied. Indeed, though we cannot quite venture, with the French philosophers, to anticipate those halcyon days when intellectual enjoyment shall have no bounds, and when the grosser wants of the body shall be satisfied by *azote*, derived from the atmosphere, we have felt great pleasure in applauding the progress of our contemporaries in almost every department of science. But, while the study of nature, unfolding to philosophers, at every step, a more extensive prospect, daily attracts fresh enquirers by the hope of new and brilliant discoveries, our encouragement is particularly wanted by those humble labourers in the field of literature, who, with far lower expectations, are called upon to exert at least an equal share of patience and sagacity. Such are our antiquaries of every description ; and all those who are occupied in endeavours to unravel the intricacy of general or particular history. The historian, it is evident, cannot add to the stock of facts already recorded ; his utmost efforts cannot diminish the distance at which he is placed, from the events and characters which he undertakes to describe, nor dispel the obscurity which time has cast in his way. On the contrary, the few rays of light which, by a judicious use of analogical reasoning, he is enabled to throw upon the distant parts of the landscape, though they contribute to improve his outline, will only show more distinctly the deficiencies of his colouring, which has vanished through the change of language and of manners, and which no diligence can enable him to supply.

We are therefore of opinion that Mr Leyden has conferred an essential obligation on the students of Scottish history, by restoring to light a tract of uncommon rarity, of which the learned and accurate Lord Hailes had strongly recommended the publication, and which

* From the *British Critic*, for July 1802.

Mr Pinkerton had described as "a most curious piece, well written, and fraught with great learning—the only classic work in old Scottish prose." It certainly exhibits a curious specimen of language and orthography; and at the same time, presents such a complete picture of manners and science at the beginning of the sixteenth century, that it may be justly deemed essential to the elucidation of the history of that period.

The first duty of an editor is scrupulous fidelity.

"Of the Complaynt of Scotland," says Mr Leyden, "only four copies are known to be extant; one of which is deposited in the British Museum; another belongs to his Grace the Duke of Roxburgh; a third to John M'Gowan, Esq. and the fourth to Mr G. Paton. All these copies were imperfect; but three of them have been completed from each other. The two last have been constantly used in this edition; and the Museum copy has been occasionally consulted. For convenience of reference, the pages in this edition correspond exactly with those of the ancient copies. The orthography of the original, however barbarous or irregular, has always been preserved, except in the case of obvious typographical blunders."

The work itself may be considered as a sort of political pamphlet. It was written for the purpose of proving, to the several factions by which Scotland was torn to pieces during the minority of Queen Mary, that the wisest method of promoting their separate interests was, to unite their efforts for the security of their country, and for the establishment of regular government. It is full of good sense, and breathes the true spirit of patriotism; but good sense and patriotism alone would not have satisfied readers of the sixteenth century. It was necessary that reasoning should assume the force of logical demonstration; that every precept should be traced to the authority of Cicero or of the Bible; that the learning of the writer should be manifested by an appeal to numerous examples drawn from profane and sacred history; and that his language should be embellished by the greatest possible variety of oratorical and poetical ornaments. If he could introduce a few descriptive episodes, together with a dream or vision, it was so much the better; and if to these was added a treatise on some favourite science, the author might be satisfied with having established every possible claim to the favour and gratitude of the public.

All this has been done in the Complaynt of Scotland, which is formed of three distinct parts. In the first, the author endeavours to raise attention by reciting the denunciations of divine vengeance against the vices of nations, and by applying to Scotland the prophecies of the inspired writers. In the third part, he sees a vision, in which an *affligit lady* (*i. e.* Scotland) relates her miseries to her three sons (*i. e.* the three estates of the country,) arraigns the ambition and treachery of the English monarchs; detects the artifices employed by them for the purpose of exciting divisions in Scotland; inveighs against the vices of the three orders; and exhorts them to unite against the common enemy. The second part, which is called a *monologue recreative*, is a perfectly independent episode, and contains a variety of rural scenes and occupations, diversified by a minute description of a sea-fight, and by a long and learned dissertation on natural philosophy delivered by a shepherd. Had this part been published singly, we should have been

almost tempted to suppose, that it was written for the express purpose of exercising the ingenuity of future antiquaries; and we confess, without hesitation, that our own, even with the aid of the excellent glossary subjoined by Mr Leyden, would have been insufficient to guide us through such a labyrinth of obscure allusions, had we not been assisted by the "Preliminary Dissertation" of the learned editor. Of this elaborate treatise, we will now present to our readers a very brief analysis.

Mr Leyden begins by examining the authority on which the Complaynt has been assigned to Sir James Inglis, or to Wedderburne, and after having proved that the titles of these authors are supported by mere allegation, proceeds to ascribe the work, on the ground of internal evidence, to Sir David Lindsay of the Mount.

"I am sensible," says he, "how little confidence can be placed in any argument derived from the similarity of style. But there is a style of thinking, as well as of writing; a style which every author finds infinitely more difficult to disguise, than that which depends on the collocation of phrases, and the form of words. Diversity of topics, or subjects of discussion, require different combinations of ideas; but the general laws of association are seldom essentially changed: the mind retraces the same succession of ideas, and reverts with fondness to its favourite objects. If the Complaynt of Scotland be the solitary production of an unknown and anonymous author, his memory has faded for ever; but if it be the composition of an author, whose other productions are still extant, we may expect to detect some traces of the same style of thinking, and the same favourite subjects of discussion. In the compositions of every author, there are many circumstances introduced which may be termed adventitious; many ideas very slightly connected with the principal subjects, which are linked with it by accidental association. Now the more accidental the introduction of those circumstances, and the more slightly they are connected with the proper subject, the stronger is the argument resulting from such a coincidence." P. xvii.

We perfectly agree with Mr Leyden in these remarks, and are of opinion, that the numerous instances of such coincidence which he has adduced, establish the probability of his conjecture, as far as it can be established by internal evidence. In the course of this discussion, Mr Leyden has introduced a very curious extract from a MS. tract on Heraldry, written or compiled by Sir David Lindsay.

The next division of the Preliminary Dissertation opens (p. lxxii.) with an account of the nature of the work; the first part of which is examined in the following thirty pages. Here, also, the commentary is enriched with illustrations from the works of early English and Scottish authors, and particularly with an extract from the theological work of John de Irlandia, containing an "Orisoun to the Holy Virgin," attributed by that writer to Chaucer, but more probably composed by Lydgate, and never before printed.

The Editor then proceeds to examine (p. cii.) the "Monologue recreative." Here he accounts for the singularity of style adopted both in the rural and natural descriptions; the frequent use of words intended to express by imitation the cries of birds and animals; the long vocabulary of obsolete sea-phrases; and the enumeration of the various pieces of artillery employed during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. He then compares the pastoral scene exhibited in the Complaynt with the present manners of the Scottish shepherds; after which, he proceeds to examine and to explain very minutely, by means

of apposite quotations, the curious catalogue of dances, and the list of musical instruments, enumerated in this singular chapter. Passing over, for the present, the similar list of romances, he is led, by the philosophical Dissertation, to discuss the astrological and pharmaceutical opinions of our ancestors; and thence proceeds (p. clxxviii.) to the third division of the work, or Complaynt of Scotland, properly so called.

Here, for the purpose of tracing the allusions to Roman history contained in his original, he presents to us the parallel passages from Bellenden's inedited translation of Livy, and adds, in a note, the metrical prologue to that work. After explaining the few allusions to Scottish history, he brings together all the notices which have been preserved respecting *Merlin the Wild*, whose pretended prophecies, as we learn from the tenth chapter of the Complaynt, were circulated by the English for the purpose of dispiriting the Scottish nation. He then briefly describes the manners of the sixteenth century, which he traces to the influence of the feudal system, and the institutions of chivalry, the code of which he exhibits by means of a most curious extract from a cotemporary work, entitled the "*Porteous* of Nobleness*;" and adds, as a counterpart to these laws, a severe satire on the manners of the feudal nobles, called "a disputisoun bitwen the bodi and the saule," extracted from the Auchinleck MS. This leads him to an inquiry into the origin of romance, in which he discusses the opinions entertained by Bishop Percy, Mr Warton, and others on this curious subject; and he concludes his Dissertation by a minute examination of the long catalogue of metrical stories enumerated in the Complaynt.

"The unexpected length to which these remarks have extended," says Mr Leyden, "renders it impossible for the editor to subjoin, as he originally intended, an examination of the style of the Complaynt, with an essay on the history of the Scottish language."

This omission, however, is in part supplied by a most valuable glossary.

"To render this part of the work in some degree amusing, he has sometimes adduced apposite passages from books and MSS. which he has had an opportunity of consulting; and has availed himself of every opportunity of elucidating popular opinions and superstitions, which, from their fleeting and unsubstantial nature, are subject to slow and almost imperceptible gradations of change. To such popular opinions and traditions, there are numerous allusions in our oldest and most respectable writers, which presented no difficulty to their contemporaries; and hence, the necessity of explaining these allusions has seldom been perceived, till the opportunity was lost. Though he thinks that these traditions may often illustrate both history and literature, he is unconscious of yielding them an improper deference, where any other kind of evidence could be procured. But where the steady light of history fails, the dark lantern of tradition is all that remains to shed an uncertain glimmering beam over the darkness of the ages that have passed away. "*Cura non deesset, si qua ad verum via inquirentem feret: nunc, fama rerum standum est, ubi certam derogat vetustas fidem.*" Liv. l. vii. c. 6.

From the preceding short and summary view of the materials brought together by Mr Leyden, it will appear that he is eminently

* "*Porteous or pertuis, quasi portes vous*;" a catalogue, vade Mecum, or manual.

qualified, by the extent and variety of his studies, as well as by his poetical taste, for the task which he has undertaken. The numerous prose specimens interspersed in his Dissertation, are no less interesting from the subjects which they illustrate, than as contributions to the history of our language; and the poetical extracts possess, generally, considerable merit independent of their rarity. We only lament that the ingenious editor has omitted to add, to his Dissertation, a general table of contents, for the purpose of easier reference. We are aware that this omission cannot now be repaired, because the commentary on the Complaynt of Scotland must probably share the fate of its original, and may never reach a second edition; but we conceive that the mass of materials here collected might, without much difficulty, be thrown into a more popular form, and thus find access to many classes of readers, whose curiosity will be instantly repressed by the obsolete language and uncouth orthography of the 16th century.

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